



You are driving in the right lane on a major road. The photograph shows the view from the driver's seat, and you can see shops and houses on the left side of the road as you go down the hill. You need to make a left turn a bit further down the road, so you decide to change lines after checking your left side mirror.



Your Position



Weather



Time of Day

You are about to change lanes and move to the left.

What should you be looking at right now?

ANSWER

You should be watching for the cars ahead of you on your left.

After switching lanes, the car in front of you slowed down and you almost crashed into it. If you look at the first photo, you can see that a navy blue car is indicating a turn to the left and is slowing down to pull into one of the stores. This caused the car behind it to slow down. When changing lanes, drivers tend to focus all their attention on checking their

mirrors, and forget to pay attention to what's happening in front of them. On larger roads lined with shops and side streets, don't forget that cars may slow down at any time to turn off the road. Also, don't forget that your car has blind spots hidden from the mirrors. It's important to always perform a direct visual check of your blind spots.

Cause and frequency of rear-end collisions due to inattentive drivers

1 Distracted by the view	17,393	5 Operating on-board TVs and other devices	2,121
2 Dropping something	12,660	7 Checking mirrors, etc.	1,760
3 Looking at other cars, etc.	10,491	8 Operating radios and other devices	1,476
4 Trying to find roads, signs, etc.	3,273	9 Looking at magazines and other materials	1,414
5 Paying attention to other passengers	2,883	10 Other	20,317

Source: ITARDA (2015)

Rear-end Collisions Resulting from Inattentive Drivers

Rear-end collisions resulting from inattentive drivers includes not only drivers who get distracted and look away from the road but also drivers who pay too much attention to other cars, their mirrors, and other things related to driving (see chart above). People doing these things are less likely to be aware that they aren't paying attention, so drivers should be careful of them.

● Read Nagayama's risk prediction commentary online. (Japanese only)

Diagram by Hideaki Kinjoh  
Photography by Norihiro Ochiai

